

Daniel L. Tavana

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Academic appointments

Pennsylvania State University, Department of Political Science Assistant Professor of Political Science	2022-
Université Toulouse 1 Capitole, Institute for Advanced Study in Toulouse (IAST) Research Fellow	2021-2022
Yale University, MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies Pre-doctoral Fellow (Council on Middle East Studies)	2020-2021
Lecturer (Department of Political Science)	2020-2021

Education

Ph.D., Politics, Princeton University Fields: Comparative Politics, Middle Eastern Politics, Political Methodology Committee: Amaney Jamal (Chair), Christopher Achen, Rory Truex	2021
M.P.P., John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University	2012
M.Phil., International Relations, University of Cambridge	2010
B.A., University of Pennsylvania, <i>summa cum laude</i>	2009

Affiliations

Research Associate, Centre for Social Sciences Research and Action (Lebanon)	2018-
Associate Research Fellow, Swedish Institute of International Affairs (UI)	2021-2025
Visiting Fellow, Johns Hopkins University	2019-2020
Visiting Researcher, American University of Kuwait	2017-2019
Visiting Fulbright Scholar, Gulf University for Science & Technology	2017-2019

Books

- [1] **Daniel L. Tavana.** *Opposition: How Ideology Disrupts Authoritarian Elections.* Under review, Cambridge University Press.
— Best Dissertation (honorable mention), MENA Politics Section, APSA (2023)

Journal articles

- [6] Alexandra Domike Blackman, Nicholas J. Lotito, Elizabeth R. Nugent, and **Daniel L. Tavana**. 2026. “The Social Legacies of Repression: Family, Friends, and Political Participation.” Forthcoming, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.
- [5] **Daniel L. Tavana**. 2026. “Endogenous Opposition: Identity and Ideology in Kuwaiti Electoral Politics.” *American Journal of Political Science* 70(2): 623-642. DOI: [10.1111/ajps.12960](https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12960).
 - Roy C. Buck Award, College of Liberal Arts, Pennsylvania State University (2025)
 - Best Article Award, Democracy & Autocracy Section, APSA (2026)
 - Best Article Award (special recognition), MENA Politics Section, APSA (2026)
- [4] **Daniel L. Tavana** and Erin York. 2025. “Legislative Cooptation in Authoritarian Regimes: Policy Cooperation in the Kuwait National Assembly.” *British Journal of Political Science* 55. DOI: [10.1017/S0007123424000371](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123424000371).
 - Best Paper Award (runner-up), King’s College QPE Research Group (2021)
- [3] Christiana Parreira, **Daniel L. Tavana**, and Charles Harb. 2024. “Ethnic Political Socialization and University Elections.” *Party Politics* 30(3): 550-569. DOI: [10.1177/13540688231166088](https://doi.org/10.1177/13540688231166088).
- [2] Rory Truex and **Daniel L. Tavana**. 2019. “Implicit Attitudes toward an Authoritarian Regime.” *Journal of Politics* 81(3): 1014-1027. DOI: [10.1086/703209](https://doi.org/10.1086/703209).
- [1] **Daniel L. Tavana**. 2011. “Party Proliferation and Electoral Transition in Post-Mubarak Egypt.” *The Journal of North African Studies* 16(4): 555-571. DOI: [10.1080/13629387.2011.639142](https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2011.639142).

Working papers

- [4] **Daniel L. Tavana**. “Ideology, Constraint, and Support for Authoritarian Rule: The Iranian Belief Network.” Revise & resubmit.
- [3] **Daniel L. Tavana**, Christiana Parreira, and Lindsay Walsh. “From Protest to Parliament: Lebanon’s October Revolution and the Rise of Movement Parties.” Revise & resubmit.
- [1] **Daniel L. Tavana**, Kevan Harris, Amir Farmanesh, and Chi Shun (Gary) Fong. “Who Overreports? Regime Support and Preference Falsification in Iran.”
- [2] Erin York and **Daniel L. Tavana**. “Institutional Backlash: Assembly Dissolution and Snap Elections in Authoritarian Regimes.”

In progress

- [3] Mostafa El Sharkawi and **Daniel L. Tavana**. “Religious Calendars and Legislative Behavior in an Authoritarian Parliament.”
- [2] **Daniel L. Tavana** and Gilad Wenig. “Extracting Elite Career Data from Arabic CVs: An Open-Source LLM Approach.”
- [1] **Daniel L. Tavana**, Kevan Harris, and Zep Kalb. “Mass Protest and Electoral Behavior in Authoritarian Regimes: Evidence from the Islamic Republic of Iran.”

Book reviews

- [1] **Daniel L. Tavana.** 2022. "After Repression: How Polarization Derails Democratic Transition." *Democratization* 29(5): 974-976. DOI: [10.1080/13510347.2021.2017424](https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2021.2017424).

Book chapters

- [1] **Daniel L. Tavana.** 2013. "Party Proliferation and Electoral Transition in Post-Mubarak Egypt." In *North Africa's Arab Spring*, ed. George Joffé. London: Routledge, 51-68. DOI: [10.4324/9781315874593](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315874593).

Awards and fellowships

U.S. Fulbright Student Fellow (Kuwait)	2017
AMENDS Fellow, Stanford University	2014
Public Service Fellow, Harvard University	2010
Thouron Scholar, University of Cambridge	2009
Beijing Summer Fellow, Project IMUSE	2009
Truman Scholar, The Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation	2008
University Scholar, CURF, University of Pennsylvania	2007
Federal Service Student Ambassador, The Partnership for Public Service	2008
Atlas Award for Excellence in Education, World Affairs Council of Philadelphia	2005
Okumus Fellow, World Affairs Council of Philadelphia and TAFSUS	2005

Grants

External

Governance and Local Development Institute, University of Gothenburg (\$2,500)	2023
United States Institute of Peace (\$10,000, canceled)	2023
Open Society Foundations (\$200,000)	2020
Project on Middle East Political Science (\$3,000)	2018
Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Iran & Persian Gulf Studies, Princeton University (\$30,000)	2018
Fulbright U.S. Student Program (\$46,000)	2017
Riksbankens Jubileumsfond (\$42,000)	2016
United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (\$20,000, declined)	2014

Penn State

Research grant, McCourtney Institute of Democracy (\$5,000)	2026
Research grant, McCourtney Institute of Democracy (\$5,000)	2025
Research grant, Center for Social Data Analytics (\$2,500)	2024
Research grant, McCourtney Institute of Democracy (\$4,000, declined)	2023

Princeton University

Multi-Center Competitive Dissertation Award, Department of Politics (\$15,000, declined)	2018
Dissertation research grant, Bobst Center for Peace & Justice (\$5,500)	2018
Research grant, Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Iran & Persian Gulf Studies (\$3,000)	2017-2018
Language study grant (summer), PIIRS (4x, \$2,125)	2015-2018

Language study grant (summer), Department of Near Eastern Studies (4x, \$1,500)	2015-2018
Language study grant (summer), Bobst Center for Peace & Justice (\$4,000)	2015
Fieldwork grant, Bobst Center for Peace & Justice (\$1,000)	2014

Harvard University

Research grant, Ash Center for Democratic Governance & Innovation (\$2,500)	2011
Research grant, Middle East Initiative (\$1,250)	2011
Research grant, International and Global Affairs Concentration (\$1,000)	2011
Research grant, Belfer Center for Science & International Affairs (\$4,500)	2011

Teaching

Methods of Political Analysis Pennsylvania State University (graduate)	Fall 2025
Government and Politics of the Middle East Pennsylvania State University (undergraduate)	Fall 2025
Methods of Political Analysis Pennsylvania State University (graduate)	Fall 2024
Comparative Political Behavior Pennsylvania State University (graduate)	Fall 2024
Comparative Politics: Theory and Methodology Pennsylvania State University (graduate)	Spring 2024
Politics of the Contemporary Middle East and North Africa Pennsylvania State University (undergraduate)	Spring 2024
Comparative Political Behavior Pennsylvania State University (graduate)	Spring 2023
Politics of the Contemporary Middle East and North Africa Pennsylvania State University (undergraduate)	Spring 2023
Politics of the Contemporary Middle East and North Africa Pennsylvania State University (undergraduate)	Fall 2022
Public Opinion and Political Behavior in the Middle East Yale University (undergraduate)	Spring 2021
Applied Quantitative Analysis, with Omar Wasow Princeton University (undergraduate)	Spring 2019
The Modern Middle East, with Max Weiss Princeton University (undergraduate)	Spring 2017
The Politics of Modern Islam, with Bernard Haykel Princeton University (undergraduate)	Fall 2016
Challenges of Democratization, with Pippa Norris John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (graduate)	Spring 2012
Spring Exercise (capstone activity), with Mary Jo Bane John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (graduate)	Spring 2012

Advising

Current Ph.D. students: Cihan Duran, Chi Shun (Gary) Fong, YiMin Huang, Viktor Siamionau
Former Ph.D. students: Muhammad Kara (Higher Education), Younes Karimi (Informatics), Sara Walsh

Invited presentations

University of Alabama, Andor and the Politics of Star Wars	2026
European University Institute, Political Behaviour Colloquium	2025
Geneva Graduate Institute (IHEID)	2025
University of Bocconi, Department of Social and Political Sciences	2025
Pennsylvania State University, Department of Sociology	2025
Reconnnaissance Research	2024
University of Pennsylvania, Department of Political Science	2024
United States Institute of Peace	2024
University of Oxford, <i>Change, Adaptation, and Contention in Autocracies Conference</i>	2024
University of Gothenburg, Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project	2024
Governance and Local Development Institute, <i>Annual Conference</i>	2024
Pennsylvania State University, <i>Midwest Workshop in Empirical Political Science</i>	2024
Kuwait University, Department of Information Studies	2023
University of Wisconsin-Madison, <i>Minority Politics in and of the Middle East Conference</i>	2023
Institute for Advanced Study in Toulouse (IAST), <i>Friends of IAST Conference</i>	2023
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, <i>Midwest Workshop in Empirical Political Science</i>	2022
Université Libre de Bruxelles, Centre d'Etude de la Vie Politique (CEVIPOL)	2022
American University of Beirut, <i>Everyday Contestation in the Arab World Workshop</i>	2022
European University Institute, Political Behaviour Colloquium	2021
King's College, Quantitative Political Economy Research Group	2021
Northwestern University, <i>Southwest Workshop on Mixed-Methods Research</i>	2021
Yale University, Council on Middle East Studies	2021
London School of Economics and Political Science, <i>Kuwait Goes to the Polls</i>	2020
Harvard University, <i>Experimental Political Science Graduate Student Conference</i>	2019
American University of Kuwait, <i>Gulf Studies Symposium</i>	2019
American University of Beirut, <i>Breaking the Mold Workshop</i>	2019
Gulf University for Science & Technology, Global Studies Center	2018
Rice University, <i>Pluralism and Inclusion in Post-2011 Kuwait Workshop</i>	2018
American University of Beirut, <i>Social Science Experimental Development Workshop</i>	2018
American University of Kuwait, Center for Gulf Studies	2017
American University of Beirut, <i>Social Justice in the Arab World Since 2010 Workshop</i>	2017
New York University Abu Dhabi, <i>Winter Experimental Social Sciences Institute</i>	2017
Lund University, Center for Middle Eastern Studies	2016
University of Manchester, <i>Political Parties in the Middle East Conference</i>	2016
Central European University, <i>Surveying Iran Conference</i>	2016
The Graduate Center at CUNY, <i>Avenues of Social and Political Change Workshop</i>	2016
Columbia University, <i>MESAAS Graduate Conference</i>	2016

Conference presentations

American Political Science Association (APSA)	2017-2021, 2023-2025
Association for Analytic Learning about Islam & Muslim Societies	2018, 2020-2023
Middle East Studies Association (MESA)	2016, 2018-2020, 2022, 2025
Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA)	2017, 2020
Southern Political Science Association (SPSA)	2017, 2019-2020, 2023-2026

Specialized conferences, meetings, & workshops

<i>Junior Scholar Book Development Workshop</i> , Project on Middle East Political Science	2023
Authoritarian Political Systems Group (APSG) Workshop	2023
Virtual Workshop on Authoritarian Regimes (VWAR)	2020, 2024
<i>Virtual Research Workshop</i> , Project on Middle East Political Science	2020

Public events

Gulf International Forum, <i>Kuwait Parliamentary Elections: Hope for a Lasting Change?</i>	2023
Gulf International Forum, <i>Kuwaiti Elections: A Chance for Real Change?</i>	2022
Doha Forum	2022
Gulf International Forum, <i>Fourth Annual Conference</i>	2021
Centre for Social Sciences Research and Action, <i>Politics and Social Contention in MENA</i>	2021
Brookings Doha Center, <i>Political Islam in the Gulf States</i>	2018
Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, <i>Annual Meeting</i>	2014
Center for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces, <i>Security Sector Governance in Egypt</i>	2014

Professional service

APSA Democracy and Autocracy Section	
Secretary (elected)	2024-2026
Association for Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies (AGAPS)	
Communications Liaison	2024-
Organizer, Graduate Student Workshop	2024
APSA Middle East and North Africa Program	
Co-Leader, Graduate Student Research Development Workshop	2024
Midwest Workshop in Empirical Political Science (MWEPS)	
Executive Board Member	2024-
Co-Host, MWEPS XI	2024
Faculty Affiliate	2022-2024
APSA Middle East and North Africa Politics Section	
Program Chair, Annual Meeting	2027
Best Dissertation Award Committee	2024
Newsletter Editorial Board	2020-2024
APSA Mentoring Program	
Mentor	2023
APSA Elections and Voting Behavior Section	
Program Chair, Annual Meeting	2023
APSA Political Organizations & Parties Section	
Jack Walker Best Article Award Committee	2023
Association for Analytic Learning about Islam & Muslim Societies (AALIMS)	
Faculty Fellow	2022-
Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) Project	
Country Expert	2015-2023

Referee: *American Journal of Political Science*, *American Political Science Review*, *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Economics of Transition and Institutional Change*, *International Political Science Review*, *International Security*, *Journal of Politics*, *Journal of Quantitative Description: Digital Media*, *Middle East Journal*, *Middle East Law and Governance*,

University service

Placement director, Department of Political Science, Pennsylvania State University	2024-2026
Colloquium coordinator, Department of Political Science, Pennsylvania State University	2022-2024
Member, Special Task Force on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Princeton University	2015
Founder and Editor-in-chief, Harvard Journal of Middle Eastern Politics and Policy	2011
Chairman, International and Global Affairs Student Advisory Board, Harvard University	2011
Associate editor, Cambridge Review of International Affairs, Cambridge University	2009

Professional and other research experience

Graduate research assistant, Bobst Center-AUB Collaborative Initiative	2017-2018
Graduate research assistant, Arab Barometer	2014-2015
Director, Board of Directors, Truman Scholars Association (TSA)	2013-2015
Research associate, Project on Middle East Democracy (POMED)	2012-2014
Graduate research assistant, Belfer Center for Science & International Affairs	2010-2011
Research assistant, "Constitutional Options for Bahrain" Project, Harvard Law School	2012

Policy and other writing

- Daniel L. Tavana. 2025. *Kuwait MPs' voting patterns driven by incentives, study finds*. Arab Times.
- Daniel L. Tavana. 2026. *دراسة أميركية: هكذا آيُصنع التعاون السياسي مع البرلمان الكويتي (American Study: How Political Cooperation with the Kuwaiti Parliament is "Manufactured" [Arabic])*. Al-Seyassah.
- Reza H. Akbari, Niki Akhavan, Peyman Jafari, Negar Razavi, and Daniel L. Tavana. 2025. *(Mis) Understanding Iran's Foreign Policy from Washington*. Policy Dialogue 25-02, Security in Context.
- Daniel L. Tavana. 2024. *سیاست، دموکراسی و آزادی بان در کویت (Politics, Democracy and Freedom of Expression in Kuwait [Farsi])*. Aasoo.
- Daniel L. Tavana. 2022. *The Unintended Consequences of Authoritarian Elections: Insights from Elite Interviews in Kuwait*. Middle East and North Africa Politics Section Newsletter, American Political Science Association.
- Daniel L. Tavana. 2021. *Leave! Contentious Politics in Kuwait during the 'Arab Spring'*. Breaking the Mold: Arab Civil Society Actors and their Quest to Influence Policy-Making, Issam Fares Institute, American University of Beirut.
- Daniel L. Tavana. 2021. *Five for Kuwait: Civil Society and Electoral Reform in an Arab Gulf State*. Breaking the Mold: Arab Civil Society Actors and their Quest to Influence Policy-Making, Issam Fares Institute, American University of Beirut.
- Daniel L. Tavana and Abdullah al-Khonaini. 2020. *Kuwait Voted This Weekend. Who Won?* Monkey Cage, Washington Post.

Kevan Harris and Daniel L. Tavana. 2019. *Polling an Islamic Republic: The Iran Social Survey*. Middle East and North Africa Politics Section Newsletter, American Political Science Association.

Daniel L. Tavana and Christiana Parreira. 2019. *Lebanon's 2018 Election: New Measures and the Resilience of the Status Quo*. Centre for Social Sciences Research and Action.

Daniel L. Tavana. 2018. *The Evolution of the Kuwaiti 'Opposition': Electoral Politics after the Arab Spring*. Baker Institute for Public Policy, Rice University.

Kevan Harris and Daniel L. Tavana. 2017. *Voter Behavior and Political Mobilization in Iran: Findings from the Iran Social Survey*. European Middle East Research Group (EMERG).

Daniel L. Tavana. 2017. *Egypt Five Years after the Uprisings: Findings from the Arab Barometer*. Arab Barometer.

Daniel L. Tavana. 2015. *U.S. Security Assistance to Egypt: Military Aid and Legislative Conditionality*. Geneva Center for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF).

Daniel L. Tavana. 2014. *Preparing to Draft a New Social Contract: Tunisia's National Constituent Assembly Election, 2011*. Innovations for Successful Societies, Princeton University.

Daniel L. Tavana and Alex Russell. 2014. *Previewing Tunisia's Parliamentary and Presidential Elections*. Project on Middle East Democracy.

Daniel L. Tavana and Nada Zohdy. 2013. *A Guide to Policy Writing*. Project on Middle East Democracy.

Daniel L. Tavana. 2013. *A Guide to Iran's Presidential Election*. Project on Middle East Democracy.

Additional training

Institute on Qualitative and Multi-Method Research (IQMR), Syracuse University	2016
Summer Arabic program, Center for Arab and Middle Eastern Studies (CAMES), AUB	2015
Certificate in Low Intermediate Arabic	

Fieldwork and language training

Kuwait, 18 months (fieldwork)	2017-2019, 2022-2023
Lebanon, 12 months (fieldwork and language training)	2015-2019
Tunisia, 2 months (fieldwork)	2014-2015
Egypt, 4 months (fieldwork)	2011-2012

Skills

R, L^AT_EX, NVivo, Qualtrics
Modern Standard and Levantine Arabic (advanced), Persian/Farsi (fluent)